

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (b) As per the existing EXIM Policy, imports and exports of Iron and Steel are freely allowed. Any one, including the Government can import or export steel.

(c) Prices of steel are determined by the interplay of market forces. However, one of the factors for decline in the domestic prices of steel is the dumping of steel in India by some countries.

(d) Government have taken several steps to help the steel industry in the country. These *inter-alia* include;

- * Enhanced allocation for infrastructure development, housing, power, highways in the last two budgets.
- * Launching of a National Campaign for increasing demand for steel especially in non-traditional sectors.
- * Setting up of an Institute for Steel Development and Growth (INSDAG) with all major steel producers as members to enhance steel consumption all over the country.
- * Rationalisation of excise and customs duty; streamlining of anti dumping machinery, enhanced projects financing through ECB route, speedy implementation of infrastructure/consumption projects etc.
- * Rationalisation of duty credit rates under Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) Scheme on most of the iron and steel items to encourage export of iron and steel.
- * Exclusion of freight and handling charges for computation of Excise Duty on steel despatched from stockyards of integrated steel plants.
- * Reduction in duty on raw materials used in steel making.

Corporations for development of tribals

2496. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TRIBALS AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the States which constituted Corporations for the development of tribals;

(b) whether Government are providing grants for setting up and running such Corporations; and

(c) the activities carried out by such Corporation to help tribals?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) and (b) The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, M.P., Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura and the UTs of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep have constituted Corporations for STs and the State Govts. of Goa, H.P., J&K, Kerala, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Sikkim and UP and the UTs of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu have constituted Corporations for SCs and STs. Central Government provides assistance in the form of investment to the Corporations.

(c) The ST Development Corporations have been acting as guarantors and promoters for credit support and providing missing inputs by way of margin money loans and subsidy to the target group. The ST Development Corporations mainly take up employment oriented schemes in the fields of:—

- (i) Agriculture and Allied activities including minor irrigation;
- (ii) Small Scale Industry;
- (iii) Transport and
- (iv) Trade and Service Sector.

Low utilisation of funds by Ministry

2497. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that utilisation of funds under both plan and non-plan schemes of his Ministry has been quite low upto March, 2000;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that huge amount of funds has been released at the end of the financial year;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and